bearing a tronsponder for Doordarshan telecasts; and

(b) what specific programmes are proposed to be telecast with the help of ASIASAT transponder?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (KUMARI GIRIJA VYAS): (a) and (b) The negotiations under the auspices of the Department of Space for hiring requisite capacity in the space segment on ASIASAT Satellite held in December, 1991 did not prove to be successful. The proposed facility was envisaged to be used primarily for back-up for the distribution of National Service in the event of contingency situation in INSAT 1D and to provide regional service in identified Border States.

Permission to Foreign News Agencies

481. SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had any plan to permit access to foreign agencies and media to Indian newspapers; and

(b) whether the enforcement thereof has been deferred or frozen; if so, the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (KUMARI GIRIJA VYAS): (a) and (b) Foreign news agencies can have access to Indian newspapers only through an Indian News Agency. Besides no foreign-owned periodical can be published from India and foreign pericidicals/ newspapers are also not allowed to bring out Indian editions. There had been some requests for liberalisation of policy and consultations have been initiated with concerned organisations including Press Council of India. However, no decision has been taken to change the existing policy.

Agreement for a Russian Transponder for PTI

482. SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Press Trust of India (PTI) has negotiated an agreement with the Russian space authorities to seek the services of a transponder; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the agreement and the cost involved therein?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (KUMARI GIRIJA VYAS): (a) and (b) PTI have informed that they have not directly entered into any agreement with Russian Space Authorities for a transponder. They have further stated that a private Indian Company has negotiated for the service of two transponders on the Russian Ekran 15 Satellite for possible broadcast of Indian television programmes in the region. Government do not have details of the negotiations or the costs involved.

Formulation of Advertisement Policy

483. SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) what steps, if any, have been taken or are being taken to formulate a clear and articulate policy document on the Government's advertisement policy as recommended by the Estimates Committee of the Lok Sabha in its 8th Report, presented on March 5, 1992; and

(b) what are the norms and guidelines followed at present in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (KUMARI GIRIJA VYAS): (a) The report of the Estimates Committee was presented to the Lok Sabha on March 5, 1992. A study has been initiated on the recommendations contained in